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Jagiello, Jolanta (2012) The artist within. In: The Sixth Art of Management and Organisation Conference, 04-07 Sep 2012, The University of York. . [Conference or Workshop Item]

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‘The Artist Within’

by

Jolanta Jagiello

Middlesex University Business School

The Burroughs

London

NW4 4BT

j.jagiello@mdx.ac.uk

Abstract

The Arts lead the way in facilitating our creative individualism in opening up our imagination to future innovations:

‘Our conceptual life, shaped by the imagination and the qualities of the world experienced, gives rise to the intentions that direct our activities. Intentions are rooted in the imagination. Intentions depend upon our ability to recognise what is and yet to imagine what might be.’ (Eisner, p.7)

This paper draws on over 10 years experience as a workshop tutor on the Open University MBA residential schools in Creative Management, running from 2 to 4 days. These residential schools engaged participants in a psychologically safe environment where creativity flourished, in which they could be flexible, receptive, and open to new experiences. There was a willingness to play around with new ideas, and to experiment with their possibilities back in the workplace.

As workshop tutor I will reflect on the lessons learnt in facilitating with highly arts-based right-brained approach versus a logically structured left-brained approach. The aim of using a right-brained approach was to enable participants to experience challenges, which were both enjoyable and energetic and to have the freedom to be independent and take initiatives. A liveliness was experienced which led to feeling excitedly busy with an openness to trust each other and take the time to generate new ideas. Above all the arts-based workshops: created mood settings in which happiness and humour was expressed; allowed debates involving contentious ideas to be voiced; enabled conflicts to be handled constructively; gave support where participants listened attentively; and encouraged risk-taking at an emotional level.

CREATIVITY IN BUSINESS

As businesses enter the 21st Century they are confronted more and more with the question of how to introduce more creativity and innovation in the workplace, and yet as Edwards [1] puts it:

“What on earth is creativity? How can a concept be so important in human thinking, so crucial to human history, so dearly valued by nearly everyone, yet be so elusive?”

A survey [2] conducted on behalf of Canon and the Arts Council in 2006 of over 1,800 UK bosses and workers revealed only 4% of managers said that the first thing they look for is artistic flair or creativity in a prospective employee despite the fact 36% believed that creativity is very important for the future of their business. In large corporations, 2% of bosses placed creativity at the top of their skills checklist when recruiting, whilst in smaller businesses 15% stated creativity as the most important quality in a new employee. Creativity also seems to be misunderstood – one in five managers shared the view that being creative means dressing unconventionally, participating in wacky stunts and even go as far as saying that it is ‘unnecessary’ in the workplace.

Partly, the reason why I believe creativity is so elusive to business is that although, businesses are clear which activities, and what are the key components of creativity and innovation needed to achieve this, they are limiting their views to problem-solving as the main creative skill. Yet, they acknowledge that ‘newness’ i.e. thinking of something no one has thought of before is the key component of creativity.

“To many people in the commercial world, the word ‘creativity’ is a synonym for ‘problem-solving’. In business jargon, managers try to ‘get out of the box’ in order to ‘think laterally’ and ‘provide creative solutions to problems’. Increasingly however, businesses are realising that creativity is not just the activity of brainstorming in hotel room (after which everyone can conveniently get back in the ‘office’ box) but something new - the promotion of change and experimentation which is vital to growth, healthy development, and survival.” (Stockil, 1998, p.10)

Tim Stockil, founder of Arts and Business’s arts-based learning programming, and a pioneer of arts-based learning in continuing management education, intention is to embed the arts right into the centre of business culture, making the arts an integral part of business process rather than a bolt on accessory [3]. This will not limit creativity just to creative problem-solving, but aim to provide sustainable resource of creativity leading to organisational innovation. The business challenge in the 21st Century, according to Nancy Adler [4], is dominated by managing chaos and complexity captured in three distinct trends: discontinuous change; networked teams; and simultaneity. In the 20th Century, business strategies advocating continuously improving existing products and processes are no longer working as business leaders are turning to artists and more arts-based approaches to invent the next new product.

“Twenty-first century society yearns for a leadership of possibility, a leadership based more on hope, aspiration, and innovation than on the replication of historical patterns of constrained pragmatism. ... Responding to that question demands anticipatory creativity. Designing options worthy of implementation calls for levels of inspiration and passionate creativity that, until recently, have been more the domain of artists and artistic processes than the domain of most managers” (Adler, 2006, p. 487)

Challenging the established authority of continuous improvement, if you have to seek the approval of several layers of authority before any decisions can be made or ideas

implemented, will certainly stifle innovation in organisations [5]. The core of creativity and productivity, Barron [6], lies in creating a learning environment, where the intermix of affective and cognitive abilities includes: challenging assumptions; taking risks; making connections; taking advantage of chance; recognising patterns; and seeing in new ways. Arts-based learning in continuing management education based on visual arts, improvisational acting, reflective writing, drawing, music, poetry, film, is ideally suited to meeting the challenge of providing ideas that businesses are looking for in their search for 'newness'.

CREATIVE MANAGEMENT AT OPEN UNIVERSITY

The focus of this paper is a reflection of my practice as a residential tutor on the Residential School at the tail end of B882 Creative Management later to become B822 Creativity, Innovation, and Change, an optional elective on the MBA at the Open University Business School (OUBS). B882 Creative Management ran from 1991 to 1998 and B822 Creativity, Innovation and Change from 1999 until 2012. Over 15,000 students studied on these elective courses in the 21 years it run. The course as a whole was described on the OUBS website as having a slightly maverick quality. It was the most popular Open University Business School Masters elective course in an 18-year longitudinal study conducted by Dr Jane Henry [7].

The course elective consisted of 3 blocks. Block 1 Creativity, Cognition and Development offered an introduction with a psychological orientation to creative approaches to management, focusing particularly on the individual level of creativity, culminating in tutor marked assignment (TMA1). This was followed by Block 2 Managing Problems Creatively, which looked at ways in which managers and teams can approach problem management creatively. It was supported by the associated Techniques Library with over 150 techniques ranging from problem exploration, mapping, idea generation, decision-making, acceptance-finding, to action planning. The residential school sat in the middle of Block 2, and its emphasised a variety of problem-solving and opportunity-finding approaches and frameworks such as staged problem-solving, orchestrated debate, mapping, and narrative approaches such as storytelling and the use of imagery and metaphor.

On completion of TMA 2, Block 3 Changing Organisations dealt with ways of managing innovation, developing a creative organisational climate, and approaches to transforming organisations. The block compared various approaches to organisational change and restructuring, including empowerment, reengineering, the learning organisation, partnership and self-organisation, culminating with TMA3.

RESIDENTIAL SCHOOL FACILITATION

The Residential School in the 2.5 days format has 7 two hours tutor workshops, and 5-6 one hour elective slots, allowing tutors to facilitate the school content using their own 'brand' of creativity. This can range from left-brained approaches of creative problem-solving with a selection of techniques from the Techniques Library to more right-brained approaches employing storytelling, imagery and metaphor, a more arts-based approach. The 8 to 10 tutors tended to fall across a spectrum from left-brained, to a combination of both, to a purely right-brained approach which Lotte Darso [8] has described as 'artful creation' in her book: "Artful Creation. Learning - Tales of Arts-in-Business". She set out to understand arts in business management education by understanding arts in the actual conduct of business today. She found four art classifications in Art-in-Business as 'decoration, entertainment, instrument, and as strategic'. The tutors tended to adopt one of these approaches when moving along the spectrum from left-brained to right-brained approaches.

The first approach as ‘decoration’ is where the tutor workshop room is decorated in posters with inspirational quotes on a background of beautiful imagery inspired by nature. The second classification would involve excursions outside to pick up stones, leaves, twigs, in order to create a collage to break out of the intense creative problem-solving sessions. Using the arts as ‘instrument’ would be employed for teambuilding, communication, leadership development, and problem-solving purposes using theatre games, and finger-painting exercises. The last classification, which was my favoured approach, was to integrate the arts in a strategic process of transformation, involving: personal development and leadership; culture and identity; creativity and innovation. My aim was to explore new approaches for learning, suggesting new creative and artful competencies that point towards the birth of a new paradigm.

ARTS-BASED FACILITATION

My training as a facilitator started on the 3 year FACETS programme run at City University, a person-centred and existential approach to counseling. The first year of the programme was completed with a Certificate in Counselling, Groupwork, and Self-development. I then decided to move onto to Diploma Therapeutic and Educational Application for the Arts from the Institute of Arts in Therapy and Education as I wanted to built my final year project on the Certificate that engaged arts-based process to express myself. The Diploma course opened my eyes to a new paradigm of ‘artful creation’ that draws on our full human potential, by expanding our consciousness through profound personal experiences facilitated by artistic processes.

In 1994, I found myself at a crossroads, whether to study part-time for an MBA, the logical thing to do, or to follow my heart and study on MA Performing Arts at Middlesex University. I choose the latter, and followed this up by immersing myself in one-year full-time MA in Theatre Arts at Goldsmiths College. In that year, I took up welded metal sculpture at Morley College to further expand my knowledge and skills in artistic techniques as a maker. It is with this background, that I applied to be a residential tutor in 1999 on the Creative Management Residential Schools and was accepted. I believe I was chosen for my unique skills set in the facilitation of arts-based approaches to continuing management education rather the more standard set of skills gained from an MBA, summarized eloquently by Nancy Alder in her article ‘The Arts and Leadership: Now that we can do anything, what will we do?’:

“Designing innovative options requires more than the traditional analytical and decision-making skills taught during the past half century in most MBA programs. Rather, it requires skills that creative artists have used for years. Many management experts suspect that the traditional MBA is obsolete (Bennis & O’Toole, 2005; Ewers, 2005; and Mintzberg, 2004, among others).” (Alder, 2006, p.4)

My background and experiences meant I was developing into a facilitator of ‘artful creation’. Lotte Darso [8] defines ‘artful creation’, as art experiences that initiate an inner transformation, which opens up a special kind of consciousness. This type of consciousness can only be developed through direct experiences involving feelings, and touches the person profoundly. The concept of ‘artfulness’ encompasses body, mind, heart, and spirit. I was mindful of how ‘Logic Can Kill Creativity’ one of the 10 attitudes that can manifest themselves towards creativity identified by Mark L. Fox (ex-NASA scientist) of ‘Sly as a Fox’ creative thinking training company [9]. Julia Cameron’s in ‘The Artist’s Way’ [10] identified the Censor residing in our ‘Logic Brain’, as an internal critic who can criticize us mercilessly particularly our ‘Artist Brain’. My aim as a facilitator was to find a way to quieten

the internal critic, so as our ‘Artist Brain’, the inventor, can freely associate, freewheel, make new connections, and above all play.



Figure 1: Logic Brain vs Artist Brain

‘ARTFUL CREATION’ WORKSHOPS

The 2.5 day format Residential School started with registration on Day 1 at 2pm, and runs until 1pm on Day 3. After the Course Director’s Welcome on Day 1, the Tutor Fair offered the delegates an opportunity to select their tutor for the workshops. The delegates’ mill around and looked at the informal stands that the tutors created ‘advertising’ their brand of creativity from a spectrum of left-brained to right-brained approaches. I described my offering as “process-oriented, experiential approach engaging with imagery and metaphor leading to the development of journey plans full of strategies, tools, emotions, both personal and organizational”.

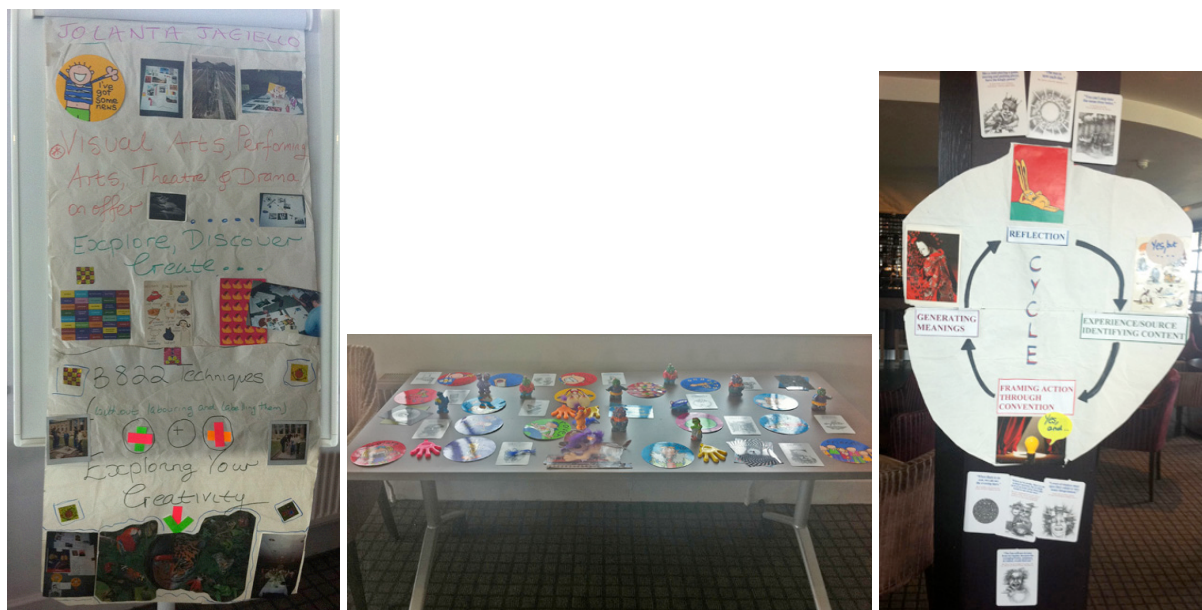


Figure 2: Tutor Fair Stands

I like to attract a tutor group of 8 to 10 participants who have put me down as their 1st and 2nd choices. An even number is important, as the participants work in pairs, individually and two groups of 4 to 5 throughout the tutor workshops. I don’t make it easy for participants to choose me as a tutor in the Tutor Fair, as I like them to take responsibility for their learning and manage the risk in choosing me as tutor who may work in ways they are totally unfamiliar with. Workshop 1 was on Day 1, and then Day 2 consisted of 4 tutor workshops,

followed by 2 evening electives, Day 3 concluded with 2 tutor workshops. There was usually one hour elective before the workshop 1, and 2 morning electives on offer on Day 2 and Day 3. I offered 3 electives: 'Postcards from the Edge' creating visual collages which are facilitated; 'Who Dares Wins' focusing on assumptions we make on what is 'true or false', 'yes or no', 'right or wrong' through exploring diabolical dilemmas; 'Tell me a Story' involving creating a story in progress using prompt cards, and then reading it out to the whole group as the story progresses.

Nissley [11] describes five characteristics of "artful creations" which is very good framework to use to analyse the 7 tutor workshops. Workshop 1 Creative Bonds & Storytelling introduced a presentational language that will be used throughout all the tutor workshops - a means of representing knowing and expressing meaning through expressive forms, allowing us to see what we're thinking. Workshop 2 Flexibuilds & Corporate Fooling, and Workshop 3 Soundscapes & Visualstorming utilized a mediated dialogue – through the creation of analogs that mediated an inquiry into organizational life, where the analogs acted as a means through which insights may be elicited.

Moving onto Workshop 4 Trustbuilding & Playlets, this workshop emphasized symbolic constructions that act as metaphorical representations – art-like representation such as group mimes to elicit, reveal, and transform existing sense-making frameworks (e.g. 3D models, soundscapes, visual maps). Workshop 5 Mini-Mimes and Gift-Giving Ideas drew on the processes of collaborative inquiry and co-creation, for the development of shared sense-making in groups, where the 'artful creation' (group mime) was co-created by group members and their inquiry was self-guided, not relying on the tutor as the facilitator.

The last two workshops Workshop 6 Endless Landscapes & Body-sculpting, and Workshop 7 Journey Plans & Back-to-Future, particularly the Journey Plans, opened up windows onto the unconscious – engaging the artful inquiry process to make 'hidden thoughts' more discussable, as a vehicle for gaining insights by externalizing unconscious or tacit thinking.

WORKSHOP 1 – CREATIVE BONDS & STORYTELLING

In the first workshop, it was important to: set the ground rules; bond the group; introduce good listening skills; engage in the creative art of story-writing and story-telling. It also introduced the tutor group to one of the many creative props they will be working with in next 2 days. The ground rules were introduced by using the concept 6 DeBono thinking hats [12], six sparkling bowler hats in the six colours - black, blue, silver, red, gold, and green are laid out on the floor. I lay the black, blue, and silver hats as a trio, and make a comment that most education encourages the 'Logic Brain', particularly the MBA, which focuses on data (silver hat) and models (blue hat) which are then critiqued (black hat). What I am looking for in the tutor workshops was the red, gold, and green trio of hats, passion (red hat), positivity (gold hat), and creativity (green hat), the 'Artist Brain'. I comment on the importance of banishing the 'internal censor' (black hat) for whole duration of the tutor workshops to allow the group to suspend disbelief and to simply play.

In order to introduce good listening skills, I used a co-counseling technique called 'what's on top'. Working in pairs, A & B, A has uninterrupted airtime for 5 minutes, B listens attentively but cannot ask any questions. Then A writes what they thought they said, whilst B what they thought they heard on the same flipchart. Then A and B swap over. Each member of the group then chooses 5 of their own words, and 5 out of partner's words plus 5 random words to each create a story. Then each participant will read their story out to the group using a

puppet as the storyteller. Then two groups are formed, and a group story is created using at least a line from each group member's story, these are then read out to the whole group.

I always ended the sessions with a 'check-out' using a Koosch ball, which allows participants to express one thought, feeling and observation about the workshop. The overall riding impressions was: 'I can't believe how quickly the time has gone', 'I feel comfortable in this group', 'I feel I can trust people in the group', and 'I'm looking forward to tomorrow'.

WORKSHOP 2 – FLEXIBUILDS & CORPORATE FOOLING

This workshop starts with a warm up session followed by 3D modeling exercise using flexi-straws which allows each student to build a model of their organization. The straws are coloured-coded using the meanings of the coloured hexagons from Peter Senge's dialogue session [13]: red for emotions; white for data; blue for policies and procedures; yellow for opportunities; and green for implementation. So for example, a start-up business is likely to start with a combination of red (passion) and yellow (opportunities) straws, connected to green straws (action), then followed by white (data) and blue (procedures and policies) straws as the business grows.

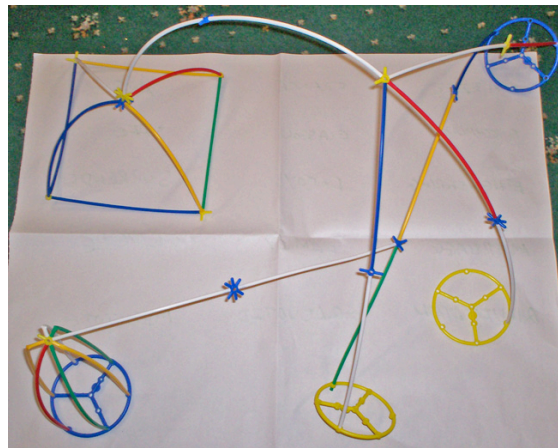


Figure 3: Model of 5 Departments in the Organisation

A facilitated session draws out the meanings in the model, and then the participants were asked to identify a point where the organization is being foolish, where they need to be challenged most about the truth. This draws on the work of David Firth in his book 'The Corporate Fool' [14], he states that, fools, question accepted wisdom, point out the obvious, cast doubt in the face of certainty, and above all speak out against those who have power. He identifies ten different roles that we can take on if we wish to imagine ourselves as the truth-bringer and challenger in the organization by "Doing the Undoable, Thinking the Unthinkable, Saying the Unsayable and Driving Your Sensible Organization Mad with Creative Folly". The participants explored which role they think they are: Alienator - representative of otherness; Confidante; Contrarian - challenger of the norms; Midwife - generator of creativity and problem-solving; Jester - entertainer and 'humorist'; Mapper of knowledge; Mediator of meaning; Satirist – deflator of pomposity; Truthseeker - teller of the truth; Mythologist - maker and breaker of myths. They also articulated what they would like to say and to whom, and what change this could bring about. This helped them to focus on the problem or issue in the organization.

WORKSHOP 3 – SOUNDSCAPING & VISUALSTORMING

After the 3D modeling workshop, the group was encouraged to break out and work with being heard and understood in way that is completely new to them by engaging their auditory senses through the creation of a soundscape. A soundscape has 3 components according to R. Murray Schafer [15], keynote sounds, sound signals, and soundmarks. The participants were asked to pick up to 5 to 6 ‘instruments’ (from whistles, to bells, jiggles on their phones) to convey: the keynote sound of their organization (e.g. harmony, discord); sound signal of their organization (e.g. chaotic, measured, paced); ending with the soundmark of their organization which is the unique sound of the organisation. Each soundscape was ‘played’ to the whole group who ‘listened intently’ offering up comments on their perceived meanings. Participants were surprised how much meaning can be conveyed through abstract sounds from the unconscious. I then draw their attention to excellent book, ‘Training With A Beat’ [16].

This was followed up with visual brainstorming session moving from the auditory senses to the visual senses. Each group member was asked to choose an image and pass it onto the group member on the right whilst receiving an image from the group member on the left, then they placed the last image on top. This reframed the problem or issue visually. They carried on passing the packs of images around the group, until they returned to them, and then they placed the last image on top. Each image that is placed on top is a visual application of Parnes/Osborn SCAMPER model of generating new ideas [17]. In this case, the use of the image is not restricted to the problem definition stage but also to the problem re-framing stages of the creative problem-solving cycle.



Figure 4: Visual Brainstorming: Application of SCAMPER model

Visual Brainstorming using images fits neatly with the thinking of Eisner [18] who has always believed in ‘new’ forms of representation as encouraging new ways of seeing. He lists five ways in which alternative forms of representation, including the soundscaping), hold out a promise to get in touch with the bedrock upon which meaning is constructed:

1. They encourage ‘empathy’ with the internal thoughts and feelings being expressed.
2. They vividly express the ‘particularity’ of the moment, experience.
3. They evoke what he calls ‘productive ambiguity’ in stimulating multiple perspectives around a single experience.
4. This leads to an increase in the questions we can use to inquire further into the nature of the experience.
5. They reveal ‘individual aptitudes’ that might otherwise have been hidden.

The participants were encouraged to apply scaling to the imagery (e.g. from vulnerable to optimum, or lowest priority to the highest priority), as well as add five words of wisdom at key points. This workshop session ended with a presentation of problem reframing, incorporated with ideas-generated, how the problem would appear if it was solved, usually expressed by the last image.

This completed the morning of tutor workshops engaging participants with the kinesthetic (3D model building), auditory (soundscaping), and visual (visualstorming) senses. This draws upon practices of Neuro-linguistic Programming (NLP) [19] which believes that information is processed through the senses: people talk to themselves even if no words are emitted (the auditory sense); one makes pictures in one's head when thinking or dreaming (the visual sense); and people express feelings in the body (the kinesthetic sense). These were externalized in these workshops to provide multiple perspectives on the problem, issue, challenge or opportunity.

WORKSHOP 4 - TRUSTBUILDING & PLAYLETS

This workshop focused on personal change (between a manager and their staff) and organizational change (through organizational restructuring), which provided the context for the problem, issue, challenge, and opportunity. This started with a number of trust-building exercises, which developed in three stages, and gives an insight into project management. Stage 1, A leads B with their eyes shut, Stage 2, A leads B with their eyes shut and lets them walk on their for a short-time, Stage 3, A leads B with their eyes shut entertaining the idea that they will swap their B partner with another A and B partnership, and then they swap partners as many times as they like.

The de-briefing is the most important part. A relationship of trust is developed between the original A (manager) and B (staff member) in Stage 1. This relationship changes when the manager goes on holiday and B is left on their own in Stage 2. How does B then perform? - the same, faster or even slower. Then the manager lets go of the relationship by exchanging their staff member with another manager as the project comes to an end. How does that feel? - confusing, disorientating, sad, or an opportunity to learn and work with someone new.

The next exercise looked at organizational change by linking A and B by an invisible thread from the centre of the hand of A to the centre of the head of B, which needed to be kept taut. Then A was linked to B and C, then B to D and E, and C was linked to F and G, and G to H. This quickly builds up to living organizational chart in which A was CEO. As A moved the whole structure needed to adjust, and their movements rippled down to H, who found themselves literally running around in circles. Then when swaps occurs between members of the organizational chart, for example between F and G, H and C, and B and A, it clearly illustrates how difficult it is to maintain the same levels of performance, whilst trying to establish new working relationships. In this scenario, the ability to improvise increasingly determines organizations' performance. Reliance on traditional managerial planning tools no longer works here, as managers find that utilizing their professional expertise and experience to respond to unpredictable threats and opportunities spontaneously works best.

All of these exercises can be found in Keith Johnson's Improv: Improvisation and Theatre [20], an ideas book and a fascinating exploration of the nature of spontaneous creativity, which is divided into four sections; status; spontaneity; narrative skills; and masks and trance.

The next part of the workshop aimed to experiment with theatre conventions as an active inquiry mode in order to discover more about the human experience to translate, present, and transform personal and organizational meanings. Theatre conventions include: narrative-action, context-building action, poetic action, and reflective action. I introduced the two groups of 4 or 5 to the conventions of context-building action through the use of still-images, tableaux, and freeze-frame conventions from video. The protagonist was asked to set a scene and the other group members were asked one by one to join the group image.

In educational purposes, there is evidence that theatre is used for a wide range of purposes stretching from psycho-therapeutic through documentary to cathartic expression [21]. The objectives of this workshop was for each member of the group, both as the actor and director of their own playlet which was in a mime format (silent movie), to explore organizational attitudes and values towards creativity and how they relate to self and others through the symbolic dimensions and real dimensions of the drama. They had an hour to create 4 to 5 playlets/mines for each member of the group.

The group engaged in discussions and responses to the source of the mine, and the issues that will form the enquiry, motivations, intentions, and consequences of the action. Then the group agreed the props and furniture to stage or to re-enact events in the source symbolically to convey the symbols, atmosphere, metaphor, and tension. It improvises its structure for each playlet/mime ready to share with the other group.

WORKSHOP 5 - MINI-MIMING & GIFT-GIVING IDEAS

In moving from traditional managerial approaches to improvisation, Nancy Adler [4] observes that core skills shift from sequential planning-then-doing to simultaneous listening-and-observing-while-doing. A successful improvisation only occurs when team members trust each other, individual star performance undermines effective collective action. Each group witnessed the other groups mini-mines (playlets with props) and gave feedback using a number of cards with words describing qualities, behaviours and attitudes that they have witnessed.



Figure 5: Improvisational Acting: Poetic Action Convention

The group performing their playlets/mines learn from the planning and presenting of their ideas, the development of their listening and problem-solving skills, working unsupervised in various groupings, and gain the ability to work symbolically whilst addressing the real needs of others in the group. The group witnessing the playlets/mines learn about the different conceptual meanings of justice, fairness, compassion in the workplace, gain empathetic understanding of others, insights into the needs of others in the group, and knowledge and information relating to the context, the protagonist's self-image and that of the workplace.

The group as a whole learn how to: personally engage with symbols, images, and metaphors, identify with characters and events; gain new understandings through the match of the content and convention; and above all discover new insights into self through risk-taking, experimentation, and improvisation. As Canadian management professor Mary Crossan [22] explains:

“Improvisation occurs when planning intersects real-time problems and opportunities. . . . In order to keep pace with change, it has become essential to blend the traditional skills of planning and analytical foresight with the ability to respond in the moment to problems and opportunities as they arise. Although improvisation has been evident in the arts, it has [only] more recently been acknowledged as an important [managerial skill] ...” (Crossan, 1997, p.1)

After a day of visioning using 3D modeling, modifying using visual-storming, and experimenting using improvisation, it was time to post the issue, problem opportunity and challenge, using a start image of its current reality, and end image to its future vision with a ‘How to?’ linking the two images with an invitation to post ideas on how to bridge the transition. An idea is understood to be a basis element of thought, that can either be visual, concrete or abstract, and it finds expression in an image or an object laying on the table (which becomes the ideas bank to choose from).



Figure 6: Ideas Bank

Each member of the group can post as many ideas as they want for any member of the groups’ ‘How to ...?’ flipcharts except their own. This takes the responsibility away from the generation of ideas for their own problem, with the focus on the other members of the group. Each idea posted is a gift of a tool, perspective, quality, behaviour, resource, strategy, model, or emotional response to enable the transition from current perceived reality to the desired future vision. A number of meanings can be associated to the image or object given [23], as it represents a: problem solution; evolutionary idea; symbiotic idea where multiple ideas are combined; revolutionary idea which breaks away from traditional thought and creates a brand new perspective; serendipitous discovery not intended revelation (usually the images or objects that are least understood by the recipient); targeted innovation - a direct path of discovery; artistic innovation disregarding practicality and holding no constraints; and the philosophical idea which is a way of thinking - “Our beliefs become your thoughts. Your thoughts become your words. Your words become your actions. Your actions become your habits. Your habits become your values. Your values become your destiny.”- Gandhi

WORKSHOP 6 – ENDLESS LANDSCAPES & BODY-SCULPTING

The morning workshop began with a guided imagery of a journey with decision points along the way where the emphasis was to reflect on how we feel. This introduced the idea that life is a journey, and end points are simply beginning points, and beginning points the end points of the previous cycle.

Building on the feelings generated by the guided imagery, this was followed up with body-sculpting exercise - a strategy used to help debrief material that evokes strong feelings. It is an effective medium to use to process powerful emotional content that is difficult to put into words. The body-sculpting strategy provides a nonverbal form of expression by requiring participants to represent ideas through body-positioning.



Figure 7: Body-Sculpting

Before the ‘How to ...?’ flipcharts are taken down and worked on to produce the journey plans. A summary mini-journey plan was created using Endless Landscape cards which create a myriorama, where the 24 cards in the pack can be laid side by side in any order to create a perfectly harmonious landscape every time with 1,686,553,615,927,922,354,187,720 combinations, including permutations that only use 23 cards, 22 cards and so on. There was time to engage in one-to-one facilitation on a linear mini-plan with the images moving from left to right to draw out their meanings for each A and B partnership.



Figure 8: Endless Landscape Mini-plans

WORKSHOP 7 – JOURNEY PLANS & BACK-TO-THE-FUTURE

The journey plan is created by starting with the current perceived reality image and ends with the future vision of the desired outcome image. In-between are selection of images and objects (in some case all of them) which have been examined for their hidden meanings and fitted into the journey plan to map out the territory, which is unknown, with signposts of tools, emotions, resources, and strategies. Journey plans play with emotions, work with ambiguity, and enable different interpretations. Journey plans with their non-analytic way of using metaphors, and analogies, can make the incommunicable communicable, and further develop intuitive approaches to problem-solving. They can create the provocative focus that stimulates reflection enabling new interpretations of new ways of perceiving reality.



Figure 9: Journey Plan – The Organisational



Figure 10: Journey Plan – The Personal (looking on)

The images and the objects were used to create a personal and organisational landscape – this involved synthesizing all the parts of the personal with the organisational represented by the images and the objects. The 5 stages of Symbolic Modelling [24] were engaged in the following way:

- Stage 1: Entering the Symbolic Domain
(Choosing the postcards and objects from the gift-giving ideas)
- Stage 2: Developing Symbolic Perceptions
(Attributing meanings to the given postcards and objects)
- Stage 3: Modelling Symbolic Patterns
(Laying the postcards and objects on the flipchart paper)
- Stage 4: Encouraging Conditions for Transformation
(Enabling a dialogue about their meanings, relationships and groupings)
- Stage 5: Maturing the Evolved Landscape
(Facilitating a change through the movement/replacement of images and objects)

Journey Plans are a great way to illustrate the power of Symbolic Modelling to explore the inherent logic of what is termed as the Evolved (Metaphor) Landscape. This enables individuals to reach a deeper understanding of their issue, problem, opportunity or challenge through the introduction of new objects and/or images which:

- Concentrate attention on lower, more fundamental levels of organisation
- Attend to higher, more significant patterns of patterns
- Broaden attention to outside or beyond existing spatial boundaries
- Lengthen attention to before or after a sequence of events
- Identify the logical conditions necessary for change
- Introduce one symbol to another so that information or resources can be transferred or exchanged

The application of the journey plans sought to improve creativity, teamwork, and encouraged innovative problem solving to seek new ways to inspire, motivate and improve personal performance in the solution of organizational problems, issues, challenges, and opportunities.

The end of the residential school started with the deconstruction of the journey plans, and a review of the workshops by the tutor with supporting handouts, and the required OUBS feedback forms.

IMPACT

This paper has enabled me to reflect on my experiences on the Creativity, Innovation, and Change residential school as a facilitator of ‘artful creations’ from a more practitioner-based approach in a case study format utilizing first-person experiences and narratives. I have been able to convey and keep alive the dynamic quality of the experiential processes to get a better feel and understanding of the lived experience:

“Intensive, unique, sensitive, experienced tutor who is able to draw out hidden depths in people and encourage them to be more daring in a gentle way. Once again she ran a small group in an unconventional way but received the highest possible rating from everyone in the group. Jolanta goes well beyond the call of duty bringing numerous extra resources for her sessions ...” (Dr Jane Henry, Course Director, 24/01/2011)

Miha Pogacnik, virtuoso violinist and cultural ambassador of Slovenia, works to inspire and engage artful behaviour. In 1980, he founded the IDRIART, Initiative for the Development of Intercultural & Interdisciplinary Relations through the Arts, he believes that a different management style is needed for the future and this must be grounded in the meaningful co-creation between the Arts and Business [25]:

“We are searching to create context in society, a context where art would provide a space in which problems would be dealt with. And of course, it would be important to create this experimental inspirational space in the middle of corporate and organizational development and reality. ... We do not get equipped for leadership at conventional business schools or any other education as they are today. Artists should be where the most important decisions are made. And the artist is the one who is making the decisions – in other words, the artist within. So every human being can in some way be awakened to become an artist in a particular way.”

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